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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CRIMINAL COMPLAINT FILED IN ANOTHER ANTHRAX HOAX CASE

SACRAMENTO, CA.-- United States Attorney John K. Vincent and FBI Special Agent In Charge Richard R. Baker announced today that Mark Van Pelt, 45, a Sacramento resident, was arrested by the FBI late yesterday and charged in a criminal complaint filed in the United States District Court in Sacramento with sending a threat through the United States Mail. According to the complaint filed in the case, on approximately October 15, 2001, Van Pelt is believed to have sent a folded dollar bill containing pinkish-brown colored powder and a small piece of paper stating "Gotcha!", as well as a Sprint payment statement, to the First Union Bank Sprint Payment Center in Dallas, Texas. An employee of the center opened the dollar bill, spilling the powder onto his hands. Thereafter, the office was evacuated, Dallas fire, police and hazardous materials units responded, and the employee sought medical treatment. The substance was subsequently examined at a laboratory and tested negative for anthrax.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Robert Tice-Raskin, who is prosecuting the case, Van Pelt made his initial appearance today before Magistrate Judge Gregory G. Hollows in Sacramento, and he was released on bail.

Van Pelt faces a maximum sentence of up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine if convicted.

The complaint filed against Van Pelt is only an allegation, and he is presumed innocent unless and until he is proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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